

NEEDLENOSE NEWS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 26, 2004

PHILIP — A BRIEF MEDICAL HISTORY

One of the things Matt and I looked forward to when adopting an ex-racing greyhound was good health.

“Retired racers are healthy,” exudes Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies, my Bible in all matters greyhound. “This dog won’t have to go to the vet for years,” claimed our adoption coordinator. We hoped to be free from the endless vet visits (and accompanying bills) that marked the rat years. In fact, quite the opposite has been the case.

Visit 1: A routine physical to let Philip and Dr. Ibsen meet. No problems detected.

Visit 2: Philip’s sutures from his neutering are supposed to be removed. The technician discovers an infection at the suture site. We go home with antibiotics to treat the infection.

Common wisdom holds that an ex-racer will have diarrhea for a few days when he is re-homed. Once he’s adjusted to the diet and lifestyle, it should go away. In our case, it didn’t. After a week, we took Philip to

the vet. (Visit 3.) I thought he might have internal parasites. Dr. Ibsen requested a stool sample. We provided one.

Diagnosis: hookworms. We go home with 3 doses of de-worming medication and instructions to put Philip on a bland diet of cottage cheese and white rice.

A few days later, Philip begins gnawing on himself and opens a big wound. I take him to the vet (visit 4). We take home a new antibiotic and a steroid to calm the irritation.

The following week, Philip still has diarrhea. We take him back to the vet. (Visit 5, stool sample 2.) He still has hookworms. We go home with another 3 doses. (Total doses: 6.) We should see improvement by the end of the course of medication, we’re told.

No luck. I call the animal hospital again. They recommend a new medication, since the other one seems to be ineffective, and that we disinfect our yard with bleach to prevent re-



Greyhounds are reportedly healthy.

infection (!). We go home (visit 6) with 3 more doses of a new de-wormer, to be given every 10 days. (Total doses: 9.) Philip is to be gradually weaned off of the bland diet, since it’s apparently doing no good.

We do so. Diarrhea continues. We are instructed to put him back on the bland diet. We do so.

Finally, after the 30-day treatment, the hookworms are gone (visit 7, stool sample 3). However, the diarrhea persists. We are now back on the antibiotic and steroid anti-inflammatory combo, and Philip is eating a hypoallergenic dog food made from potatoes and white fish. We hope it helps.

Updates will follow as events unfold.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *We brought Philip home on July 25, 2004.*
- *Retired racers are supposed to be relatively healthy dogs.*
- *In the two months we have had our dog, we have made 7 visits to the vet.*
- *Philip has taken or is currently taking 7 different medications.*
- *Philip has had 2 different special diets.*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

KIM’S JOB	2
MATT’S JOB	2
SAC WEATHER	3
A DOG’S LIFE	3
RAT NEWS	3
BY THE #S	4

THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

After two extremely stressful years, things are starting to even out for me in school. I am, once again, teaching 8th grade physical science and one scripted reading class. We are supposed to rotate with our kids, so that we have the same kids for 7th and 8th grades, but that is on hiatus for a year. This means that I can re-use the half-decent curriculum I developed last year, rather than frantically try to rewrite things I did my first year of teaching. Whew.

My classes, though large (20, 31, 36, and 35 kids in science), are incredibly good this year. When Laura, my principal, told me I'd be getting a GATE class, I had mixed feelings. On the plus side, the behavior and motivation were sure to be better. On the minus side, GATE kids are higher-skill and would need curriculum adapted up for them. I've spent the last two years trying to scaffold and pare down the

curriculum for low-skill kids.

I didn't say anything, however, and now I'm super-glad, because they are the best kids I've ever had. GATE kids have all the skills you hope all your kids have, but they never do. It's so easy to teach them. They do all their homework, they listen when you talk, they can handle loosely structured assignments — they're awesome. Some days I walk out of that class thinking, "This must be what it's like to teach at Sutter (the wealthiest middle school in our district)."

My other kids are lower-skill but VERY well-behaved. I am in heaven!

I also have a student teacher placed with me for the first part of this year. It's a compliment that Laura asked me to be a cooperating teacher, because I'm a newcomer myself, and there are a number of more experienced teachers on staff. Terri Stone, my

student teacher, is working on a credential in a special program at Sac State. She's teaching with me in my first and second period classes right now, and will eventually assume the main teacher position with first period for the remainder of the semester. That, in turn, will free me up a little. Right now, I teach four science classes in a row — first through fourth periods — and it's exhausting. In previous years, reading was always fourth period, so I'd teach three science classes and then have a scripted class. But I teach reading after lunch this year, so no break for me until my sixth period prep. Pity.

Unusual class size: my reading class is only 9 students. I'm teaching a low-level decoding class, for kids who essentially can't read at all. They're nice kids; some are special ed and some just can't read. We're reading Holes as well as doing the scripted curriculum.



A picture I stole from the Sac City school district website of lovely C.M. Goethe Middle School.

"GATE KIDS
HAVE ALL THE
SKILLS YOU HOPE
ALL YOUR KIDS
HAVE, BUT THEY
NEVER DO."

- KIM MIYASAKI,
DESCRIBING HER
3RD PERIOD
CLASS

MATT'S JOB APPLICATION

Matt is currently doing tech support at UC Davis's department of evolution and ecology. Since we now live in Sacramento, this involves a long commute for Matt. To avoid having to buy another car, he's taking the shuttle from the UC Davis medical center (UCDMC) to and from campus. UCDMC is about a mile and a half from

our house, so he bikes there and back. Or he did until that story about being able to break a Kryptonite U-lock with a Bic pen cylinder broke. So now, until Kryptonite issues a new, safer lock, I drop him off in the morning and pick him up in the evening.

However, although the peo-

ple are great, the job is kind of boring; plus, the commute is an hour-plus each way. So Matt has applied for a similar position at UCDMC. It's the same job classification, but it would be working with the UCDMC imaging research center, and he would do more actual programming. Also, the commute would shorten. So we're hoping. . .



A sketch of UCDMC that I stole from the UCDMC web site.

CRAZY SACRAMENTO WEATHER

Last Saturday was overcast and cloudy. Sunday, the weather was insane. Matt and I drove out to Davis to check out the bike lock situation (see “Matt’s Job Application,” previous page) and to get him a pair of running shoes (see “A Dog’s Life,” below).

While on the causeway, the skies opened, and it poured for a few minutes. Then it stopped. Then it poured again. Then it stopped. When we got to Davis, it was

drizzly, but no worse. So we got the shoes, checked out the lock situation, and headed home. I was a little worried about my puppy because he’d never been in a storm before and I didn’t know how he’d react.

Also, when we got back to Sacramento, it turned out that the storm had been a lot more severe here than in Davis. The freeway was very backed up, so we got off to take surface streets. They

were flooded in several places. There were piles of hail next to the road. I started to really worry about my puppy. What if the storm scared him when we weren’t home?

No worries. When we got home, Philip was contentedly snoozing on the sofa. There was hail in the backyard, and our freshly raked lawn was covered in leaves, but our street was spared flooding.



Pictures I stole from the Sac Bee website showing flooding near our area. The top picture is on C Street, the bottom one from 30th and J.



A DOG’S LIFE (BY PHILIP)

5:00 a.m.— Maraud around the house, looking for things to chew on. Pace around the house, clicking on the hardwood floors.

5:15 a.m.— Go for a morning jog with Daddy.

6:00 a.m.— Wake up Mommy by jumping on the bed and licking her face.

6:45 a.m.— Breakfast.

6:50 a.m.— Sit on the sofa to watch Mommy and Daddy leave.

7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.— Maraud around the house, looking for things to chew on. Take anything found, such as plastic bags, dish towels, dish sponge, rat food, or Rice Krispies, to living room rug and destroy. Take extra pieces outside. Outside, con-

sume berries dropped from backyard tree. Run around. Go back inside. Sleep on sofa or Mommy and Daddy’s bed.

7:30 p.m.— Evening walk with Mommy and Daddy (too slow).

8:40 p.m.— Dinner

8:30 to 10 p.m.— Sleep on bed until kicked off. Grudgingly sleep on sofa or dog bed (humph).

7:00 A.M. TO
4:00 P.M.—

MARAUD
AROUND THE
HOUSE, LOOKING
FOR THINGS TO
CHEW ON.

RAT NEWS UPDATE

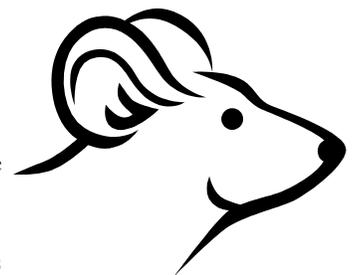
We are, unfortunately, down to our last rat. Malcom, who, contrary to popular belief, is a female, is our last rat standing. She’s doing quite well right now, though she’s getting a little old.

Shortly after we got Philip, Malcom added to our vet bills by regrowing a tumor that we’ve removed once already.

So she underwent surgery to remove the tumor and is now happy and healthy again.

Malcom runs around in the living room in the evenings now, exploring unpacked boxes or just sitting with whichever of us is out there with her. If Philip sees her through the glass door connecting the living room to the

rest of the house, he paws at the door and whines. (Did we mention that he’s a high-prey dog?) As a result, she gets her own room. Her cage is kept in the front bedroom, and Philip isn’t allowed in unless we’re there. She holds her own, though. Last time Philip sniffed her cage, she batted him on the nose.



Rats are clean, intelligent, and friendly.



Needlenose News

A MIYASAKI-RENQUIST
PUBLICATION

Contact us at:

616 40th Street
Sacramento, CA 95819

Phone: 916-455-0125
Cell: 916-996-0430
Email: kim@miyasaki.net,
msrenquist@ucdavis.edu

CHECK OUT GREYHOUNDS!

WWW.GOLDENGREYHOUNDS.COM

NEEDLENOSE NEWS — DEDICATED
TO KEEPING YOU INFORMED.

PHILIP BY THE NUMBERS

14—Number of days it took Philip to learn to get on the sofa.

30—Number of days it took Philip to learn to get on the bed.

8-12—Approximate number of hours daily Philip spends sleeping on either the bed or sofa.

5—Time in the morning that Philip consistently wakes up.

20—Approximate number of objects Philip has destroyed on the living room rug. Items we remember include: 4.5 lb. container of cashews, potato chips, plastic bags, dish towel, sock, pot

holder, Rice Krispies, Tupperware, rice, squeaky toys, timed-release dog feeding dish, dried fruit, oatmeal, rat food, wooden window blinds, and assorted papers.

2—Number of daily walks Philip gets.

2—Number of after-hours phone calls we've received from our veterinarian about Philip's care.

7—Number of visits we've made to Costco to purchase several large containers of cottage cheese and ground beef for Philip's bland diet.

2—Number of cushy dog beds Philip has.

3—Number of dog beds Philip spurns in favor of the sofa or human bed.

1—Number of dog beds that had to be returned because Philip wouldn't sit on them.

3—Number of pills Philip is currently taking twice a day.

270—Number of degrees of peripheral vision Philip is reputed to have.

2—Number of dog doors we had to install before finding one big enough.

1000— Minimum number of dollars we've spent on Philip so far, including vet bills, adoption fee, and supplies.



Ex-racing greyhounds enjoy running and can reach speeds of 45 miles per hour in just a few strides.